

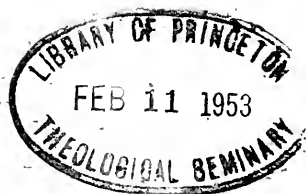
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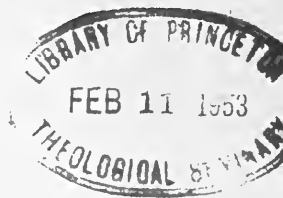
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THE TIMES AND THE MAN.



AN ADDRESS

BY

REV. PRENTISS de VEUVE, D. D.,

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Dayton, Ohio.

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF

UNION BIBLICAL SEMINARY,

SEPTEMBER 4, 1889.

DAYTON, OHIO:

PRESS OF UNITED BRETHREN PUBLISHING HOUSE.
1889.

THE TIMES AND THE MAN.

The brief time left at my disposal, after the invitation was given me to address you this morning, precluded any carefully prepared paper, such as is commonly furnished on an occasion like this. I therefore was diffident about acceding to the request of the Faculty, feeling that I could not do justice to myself; but I finally consented, in the humble hope that what I might furnish would accomplish some good to the cause in which I am so deeply interested, even if it redounded little to my own credit as a literary performance.

The theme I have selected, "The Times and the Man," is so thoroughly practical, and so fairly within the scope of my ministerial experience and observation, as I shall treat it, that I shall at least escape the criticism of a well-known professor on young preachers, namely, that they would do so much better by simply "telling people what they *knew* instead of trying to tell them what they *did not know*." I simply propose to give you some of the experience gained, and the conclusions reached after a ministry of over thirty years, that you may esteem it for what it may be worth, and may secure what profit from it you can.

Not many, I am sure, can labor for over a generation in the ministry of the gospel in this stirring century without enjoying experiences, and forming opinions which may profit others. Experience is well likened by Coleridge to the "stern light of a vessel, casting its gleam upon the path which has been traversed." But as all of our paths cross the same sea of life, and are not far removed from each other, the path I have traversed may help to guide others.

The lapse of a generation finds me tenaciously holding all the great doctrines of the faith which I resolved in my youth to proclaim to my fellow-men. But I cannot, after thirty years' experience, feel satisfied that a man should desire to preach the gospel to-day just as he did thirty years ago. The character of the age in which a preacher ministers ought to modify the char-

acter of his preaching, and the modes of pastoral work. Nor am I sure that our fathers knew everything to be known about the Bible, or the work of the minister among the people. With an ever growing knowledge of language and history, of physiology and psychology, of archæology and sociology, why should there not be secured a larger adaptability to grasp the full meaning of Scripture and to come to a better understanding of the ways in which the gospel can meet the wants and satisfy the aspirations of the human soul?

Light has been continually "breaking forth from the word of God," as devout men have studied it with all the helps of modern culture; and without of necessity abating the force of any doctrine essential to the integrity of the gospel, the message of salvation has been brought home more intelligently and usefully to the hearers of to-day. Times have indeed changed since the audience *stood* and listened two hours at a stretch to Chrysostom rolling out his beautiful periods as he *sat* before them; and our age would receive no profit from the ponderous discourses of the seventeenth century divines of England, or the polished orations of the French pulpit in the times of Louis the XIV. The change, however, does not condemn our age, for the discourses of to-day, though briefer, less scholastic and oratorical, are much more calculated to do good, are much nearer the model furnished by the Divine Teacher.

The same contrasts appear in respect to pastoral work. I shall never forget the formality of the pastoral work of my early ministry, when, after announcing my coming from the pulpit, I went from house to house during the busy hours of the day accompanied by an elder, and the whole household was summoned in and we had worship, and I was expected (in a very blundering way, too often was it done) to talk to all on the subject of religion. How different now, when the pastor's visits are generally visits of friendship, in which he meets those of the family who may happen to be at home, and must watch his opportunity to find the others, and when the happy occasion offers, press the matter of their spiritual welfare upon their attention. We have lost so much, as some think, in all this change. I do not stand here prepared to controvert that claim, but I do say that, except in seasons of general religious awakening, when the church or the community are deeply stirred, the old style of pastoral visitation would not work now; and he is

the wise pastor who accepts the change in public sentiment and labors along the line with it, as he may do very effectively if he be discreet.

The limit, however, to which the preacher may adapt himself to the times is always the line of fundamental truth and ministerial fidelity as Christ's ambassador. Truth is eternal, and human nature has suffered no molecular change under the altered circumstances of the generations. God and man occupy the same relations to one another. The problem to be solved remains precisely the same.

But let us proceed now to consider, as briefly as may be possible, the practical question: How far have the times in which we are living affected the work of the preacher for good or ill, making it easier or more difficult?

Strangely varied are the opinions held as to our times. With some, the times are *evil*, and very evil, and are growing worse. With others, these are glorious times, full of promise of a magnificent future. For myself, I can only say that I am neither pessimist nor optimist, although gladly inclining much further towards optimism than its reverse. These are glorious times.

We are living, we are dwelling
In a grand and awful time,
An age on ages telling
To be living is sublime.

But the good abounding is not unmixed with ill. We are free to confess that there is a background of shadow to the brightness. We are not free from grave perils to church and state. An inordinate greed of gain, and love of pleasure doubtless characterize our age, varied and most insidious forms of unbelief as well as the coarser blasphemies and unbeliefs of all ages prevail. Contempt is thrown upon the Word of God. His holy Sabbath is widely profaned, and everywhere appropriated to man's care and enjoyment, rather than to God's worship. Intemperance is doing inconceivable evil. Debauchery is openly practiced and secretly revelled in. Crime develops quite out of proportion to the increase of the population. The Press, which ought to be the public Censor condemning crime and vice, has become a very propagator of vice and crime by its prurient details of disgusting crime and hideous vice; by its vile pictures inflaming evil desire; by its unscrupulous use of its power for party and business purposes, without regard to truth, honesty, or

honor. Gigantic monopolies are shielded and fostered. Political corruption is wide spread and despicable, and conspiracies against good order and the very life of government are constantly brought to light. Be it so, and we cannot deny this impeachment of the age, but shall we therefore become hopelessly panic-stricken and denounce the age as hopelessly bad?

Nay! For where is the age which can show a record every way more favorable? When we fear for the church on account of the corruption which abounds, let us seek relief in the study of other times. May we not boldly demand of the despairing that they show us an age which can boast of any superiority? An age really purer, more under the dominion of love, and when the gross vices alluded to were any less prevalent or virulent? Ages may be readily picked out in which mankind were poorer, and luxury with its attendant evils were in consequence confined to the few, but what the multitude lacked in self-indulgence was more than made up in the sad total of sin and misery caused by their ignorance and brutality. A dose of history, as taken from Lecky or Hallam, Home or Macaulay, Thackeray's "Four Georges," or Dorchester's convenient "Manual of Religious Progress" ought to suffice to answer as a corrective. Vices abound in our day, they frown, nay, they *glare* upon us and terrify the timid; but let it be remembered we view them and treat them as *vices*. There have been times in the past when duelling, adultery, and fornication, blasphemy, and gambling, and drunkenness were hardly regarded as vices. Now they receive the open approval of none but the abandoned classes.

But while thus correcting the false conception of our times as relatively so evil, we should carefully prosecute the inquiry concerning their special bearing upon the work of the minister of the gospel. As much as a dozen years ago a distinguished preacher, still living,* and greatly honored among the churches, started this very inquiry in discoursing before a Theological Seminary in New England, and some of the points he made then have as much force to-day. He asserted that the notion of "**fate with all the consequences which it brings with it to the ideas of responsibility, and even to the fundamental conceptions of personal belief,**" was the most common, and the most wonderfully subtle of all the difficulties lying in people's minds, when he wrote, "With this notion comes the inevitable

* Phillips Brooks.

consequences of hopelessness, and restraint pervading all society—different in different natures; hard and defiant in some, soft and luxurious in others, but, in all their various forms, unfitting men for the best happiness, or the best growth, or the best usefulness to their fellowmen.” Other ages, of course, have developed this trait of our age, but it is now re-asserting itself, with powerful results in lessening the sense of personal responsibility, and easing the soul in living a life of selfishness and sin. Nursed, nay, pampered in the lap of this luxurious age, so powerfully disposed to materialistic unbelief through the discoveries of modern science, this dangerous tendency must be met by the preaching in the bravest and most powerful manner of the pride-humbling and soul-stirring doctrines of the gospel, revealing the personal God, and human responsibility to the divine law, and disclosing the awful adjustments of the future life. The conscience must be thoroughly awakened, in the belief that it will speak boldly and truly, when roused.

Dr. Brooks discusses two other points with equal power.

His practical analysis of the tolerant spirit of our times is striking. We may rejoice that we live in an age which, except on heathen shores, is a stranger to the fires of persecution. We may rejoice that in our own land especially, a generous spirit of toleration pervades almost all the churches, bringing them nearer together in catholicity of spirit. It also characterizes the attitude of the world toward the church. But is all this unmixed good? The question should be cautiously considered, for the rising generation of ministers may find no greater obstacles in their way than can result from the sacrifice of truth to liberty. Truth is many-sided, and those who see one side more clearly than another may be no less honest and earnest, differing intelligently and kindly from those of different views. Whereas, a toleration may exist which means simple ignorance of all distinctions, and general indifference to truth as truth. Truth is readily sacrificed to good feeling—is not felt to be of sufficient importance to contend for it—the very marrow of truth has been drawn out of the bones to feed a mistaken desire for mere brotherliness in the church. I really fear this is the character of much of the toleration of our times—it has been foaled in ignorance, and reared in utter indifference to all truth, and, of course, as an inevitable result, it has no fear of error. The watchword is: All the creeds are good enough! We are all

going to the same place! A man is not responsible for his beliefs! No wonder that with such views—mere morality of life goes for religion—such tolerant souls can readily mistake form for substance, their own righteousness for Christ's righteousness, no belief for sincere faith, and the husk for the kernel. The delusive hope deceives but to destroy, and at last perishes in unbelief and utter worldliness. I fear that the rising generation of preachers will have more and more of this to contend with in our luxurious age, and they can meet and master it only by the most positive teachings of the gospel—enforcing the folly of trusting in a religion which has no basis of vital truth formulated to the intellect, or living spiritual power to bring to bear upon the heart.

Another point made by Dr. Brooks is equally suggestive—*i. e.*, the tendency to sentimentalism coloring so much of our modern religiousness. We hear much in these latter days of a "religion superior to the teachings of the Scriptures." The twaddle comes to us in various potencies from the well-meant utterances of some emotional and shallow believers down to the gaseous flashings of Ingersoll and his rude blasphemies, defilements which are emptied on the public through the channel of a subservient and unbelieving press. This sentimentalism, which creates a God of love without justice and a religion of beauty without any sense, is rampant in some quarters. It has invaded the realm of music and poetry. Our fathers may have been austere, but their children are bent on being milk-sops. There is nothing worse than a hard theology but a soft one, and that is what is now being taught by these wise ones. Jesus, in their opinion, is always to be regarded as the tender, pitiful Savior. It is the love of Christ which must ever be put forward; *it* will always hold sinners true to the path of righteousness. "In His name!" The hardest heart will break under the spell! Under it, the hardest duty may be done cheerfully! Such gush in prayer! So many tears! Ah, it is simply sickening!! Jesus *wept* over Jerusalem, but he *curst* it. Jesus died upon the cross for sinners, but he commanded repentance as well as faith, and made *obedience to his commandments* the test of *love*. Jesus execrated Pharisee and scribe as heartily as he welcomed publican and harlot. It will be an easy road out from this sentimentalism to skepticism, and many will go to ruin by it, as many have already. The cure must be found in proclaiming the full

gospel, the real teaching of Christ. There is another characteristic of our age, which must be viewed with alarm—*i. e.*, the **increase of socialistic tendencies of all sorts**, and for the rising generation of ministers the fact is full of significance, and should give a trend to their preparation. I allude not merely to the hateful and bloody forms of anarchism, and lawlessness, and murder, upon which the state, in self-defense, must lay a strong and ungloved hand, but I refer also to the growing contempt for proper distinctions in society, based on education and culture, and the determination to level all classes down to a common standard of vulgarity. An incident occurring the other day, in our own city, and near my own residence, will illustrate my meaning admirably: Two ladies of refined manners and appearance were conversing on the sidewalk by their homes, when a miserable vagrant woman, dirty and forlorn, leading two children as offensive as herself, approache them, saying, "Seed here, womanfolks, do you know anyone who wants a washer-lady to work?" This spirit is rife among the fouler poor, and its fainter shadow is reflected on classes much above them. Labor is coming to be regarded in this country—the very paradise of the laborer—as a disgrace, to be repudiated in name if not in fact, by appropriating the titles to which merit, and education, and refinement, and ability are entitled—salesladies, and it would be sales-gentlemen, but for the awkwardness of the term; artists whose skill is directed towards cutting hair, or shoeing feet, or blacking boots, abound. Yes, everything is professional, from gambling to car-driving. This ignoble tendency must be corrected in our Sunday-schools, and from our pulpits, by the teaching of true manliness of soul. We must preach Christian manhood and womanhood, and say, with Burns,—

"What though on bamely fare we dine,
Wear hoddin gray, and a' of that;
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine,
A man's a man for a' of that.

"For a' of that, for a' of that,
Their tinsel show, and a' of that,
The honest man, though e'er sae poor,
Is king of men, for a' of that."

With this rapid glance at some of the peculiar features of our "times," we must now ask to **what extent the relation of the preacher to the people has been modified by these changed conditions**. We must confess that it requires no very careful investigation to discover important modifications.

First of all the **sacerdotal element** no longer enters into the estimate of pulpit power. Among Protestants in this land, and in fact, among some Protestants in every land, all power to mediate as priests is entirely disavowed by the ministry. We neither attempt to offer sacrifices nor to forgive sin; cheerfully have we surrendered in the interest of truth and righteousness the veneration with which superstition once invested the person of the minister, as well as his office. The Protestant minister expects to be honored only for his Master's sake, and only so far as he reflects his Master in his walk and conversation.

Again, the minister of to-day holds no **monopoly of educational power in the community**. The preacher, the lawyer, and the doctor are no longer the only educated men of the community. In most flocks the preacher shepherds men and women of culture equal, and even superior to his own, ready to controvert, as well as to be convinced.

But **social and political standing** no longer gives the power which the preacher once secured from them. Without a state church to clothe us in the official relations, making us "My Lord Bishop" and giving us great influence with a peasantry, our social and political influence depends on our essential worth, and our force of character. We are entitled to our views and our votes. The entrance of a minister of the gospel upon the arena of active politics, however, always awakens a prejudice against him in his sacred calling. Political preachers generally minister to divided and contending flocks, and very generally bring the church into disrepute.

But now **must it be confessed that these altered conditions are unfavorable to the successful prosecution of our work as ministers?** I am quite confident that they are not. Certainly no one will plead for a return of the sacerdotal feeling among our people. The blessed Master "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister," and the "disciple should not be above his Master, nor the servant greater than his Lord." Christianity arose and was developed in entire freedom from such adventitious surroundings, and the more there is of the Master's spirit among the ministry, and abroad in the church, the less weight will be put upon them. When ministry and people began to lose Christ's spirit, sacerdotalism crept in, and it rounded out at length in the papal hierarchy, and the gloom of the dark ages.

But, is the change in the literary and educational relation of

the ministry to the church, a change for the worse? Certainly no one will claim that it is so without he be ready to accept the false dictum that "ignorance is the mother of devotion." Protestant Christianity thrives best on intelligence. The school with the church always. Believing the Scriptures to be the Word of God, as implicitly as it believes the world to be the work of God, Protestant Christianity fears neither the advance of science, nor the progress of learning among the common people. The fact that he preaches to men and women of intelligence and culture simply tends to *inspire* a true minister of Jesus Christ. With newspaper and printed volume in every home, a constant spur is furnished to grapple with his fellow-men more firmly in intellectual and spiritual combat. No time need be lost in mere preliminary work of instruction. The foundation truths have been laid, the people know them.

But the preacher need never fear that the press will supplant him. Print and paper can never supplant the contact of living souls. Even a dry political campaign cannot be waged with documents alone, however valuable the documents may be. The very impersonality of the press is as much a cause of weakness as in some aspects it may appear to be a source of strength. Especially is this the case in the discussion of moral and religious questions. It passes without saying that too many of our newspapers are not controlled and edited by even moral men, and yet more conspicuously do they lack a religious character. When a man, therefore, who is known to seldom go to bed quite sober, or whose purity is readily to be impeached, or whose honesty is at a discount, attempts to teach morals, or to claim the magisterial right to pronounce opinions on matters of spiritual import, his influence is not very telling. When one would become a religious instructor, he must command respect for his character, or his labors will prove vain. It is the contaminating influence which politics always presupposes in the minds of thoughtful men that detracts from the influence of a political minister. He seems to them to have forsaken the pure and holy Jesus to become like other men, and this feeling will weaken the appreciation of the man's true worth.

But what are the qualifications of the man who shall more or less successfully meet the requirements of these times? The qualifications of a true minister demanded in these times are numerous and vital; but time would fail for me to

enlarge upon them all. What you desire from me, I feel sure, is simply the suggestion of the qualifications which appear to me most important. It goes without the saying that he must be an earnest Christian within the most positive views of religious truth, and a real, if not a lively, religious experience. Intense loyalty to Jesus Christ must characterize his piety—"he serves the Lord Christ." Without these qualifications no minister can fairly meet the wants of our times. The day has passed when unconverted men could boldly enter the ministry of the gospel without protest from the people. Personal character is now regarded as the most significant of all qualifications, and the preacher must not merely enjoy the reputation for unblemished morality, but also for real spirituality. The people may be deceived as to the last, but they must be *deceived*, for willingly, knowingly they will not endure a hypocrite or ungodly man in the sacred office.

To say that the minister for the times cannot be an uneducated man is a fact confessed by all branches of the Christian church in these days. The class of preachers who boasted of their ignorance has become, like the Dodo, an extinct species. True, a plenty of ignorant ones are left, but now they try to conceal the fact that they know so little. The pious craze which struck some educated men a few years since and led them to disregard the carefully prepared sermon and trust to the immediate inspiration of the Spirit has, I believe, largely died out. The scriptural foundation for it was slender. Balaam's ass was the only striking case given in scripture. A man may in truth educate himself outside of the schools, but all the better and easier in the schools. Thank God for all the advantages you have in this well-equipped school of the prophets, and faithfully improve all your opportunities of every sort provided by these admirable professors and this excellent curriculum. The tendency of our age in theological culture is rather toward biblical than systematic theology, but both are required for the proper balance. Avail yourselves of every chance for becoming versed in natural science, *not*, let me say, that you may make fools of yourselves by fighting the scientists, but that you may not be disturbed by their inconsequent conjectures and reasonings, and also that you may secure the happiest and widest ability for illustrating the truths you teach. I have often grieved over my own indifferent training in the sciences and have coveted the privileges of training now to be enjoyed by students.

A very important branch of investigation which should be pursued by our rising ministry is sociology. Around that subject gather the burning questions of the times, and we must not as the ministry of Jesus Christ fail to understand them, and endeavor to solve them on gospel principles.

Poetry offers an important field for your thought and examination. Unbelief is now working this mine for all it is worth, and doing vast harm. The unbelief and pessimism of Matthew Arnold breathed out in his exquisite verses will live, and curse, long after Ingersoll and his silly trash and his frantic ravings have been utterly forgotten—and even Arnold's prose writing has ceased to be read, just as the songs of Watts and Wesley, Cowper and Palmer, will bless the world from age to age.

Every age has required the full-orbed gospel, but each particular age has specially demanded some particular phase of gospel truth. At the Reformation it was salvation by faith alone. In the eighteenth century it was a living gospel as opposed to dead orthodoxy and stony rationalism, and their soul-destroying influences. For our age, and more and more clearly is the fact being revealed, the imperative demand is for *ethical preaching*. The age is developing a class of gospel hearers and weak Christians, with consciences responsive to the demands of the gospel for faith in Christ and the extension of the church, but strangely unresponsive to the claims of the Divine law upon their daily lives—self-indulgent ones, anxious to get all they can out of this world, and yet to hold on to their hopes for the future life. Covetousness is a widespread sin among this class. They make haste to become rich, and do not disturb themselves much over the way in which to secure their wealth. The land is filled with gamblers—gamblers in stocks, in lands, in the very necessities of life, and the transactions are of frightful magnitude. The most unscrupulous means are resorted to to acquire wealth suddenly, without labor, and in great magnitude. The consciences of men seem to be utterly seared; they have no regard to God's honor, or the rights of man. Trusts are multiplying, not merely to protect legitimate business, but to ruin the prospects of all but the few and to "grind the faces of the poor." Our congregations contain not a few who worship God on Sunday and bite and devour their fellow-men all the week; who help to support churches out of gains made at the expense of truth, and justice, and mercy—the public conscience and the Lord's day. To

meet this most unhealthy condition of affairs God's ministers must bring God's law to bear heavily on men's consciences. They must preach searchingly, but kindly. They must heroically favor every brave movement made in support of morals and reform, and they must use wisdom in discriminating between measures that are wise and that are unwise, however well intentioned. The cause of sound morals has suffered bitterly from the foolish radicalism of its friends, as well as from the antagonism of its foes. Wisely and boldly to discuss and support the cause of temperance, and social purity, and public honesty, and brotherly kindness, will require all our natural gifts and gracious bestowments. And to know how far to go, and when to be content taxes the courage and the wisdom often the most severely.

A strong degree of *self-reliance* seems to be more necessary to God's ministers *now* than ever before. In many respects the minister must now stand more alone and unsupported than ever before. Those who share with the minister the control of the flock are in very important respects, especially in our cities, less able to help him spiritually now than previously. Too many of our church officers are thoroughly worldly in their views, and the more prosperous they become the more worldly, as a general thing, are they likely to be. You see it in their intense devotion to business and their unwillingness to do spiritual work. Too often in our cities they mix largely with the world. You find them at the theatre and in the fashionable world. Their children are taught to dance as faithfully as to pray, and are practically made to understand that their *wordly success* is that which the parent has *chiefly* in sight. Such laxity, of course, unfits church officers for hand-to-hand work with unconverted souls. They are admirable on dress parade, but poor dependences in the strife with the world and sin.

To a young man of scholarly tastes, who dreams that when once in the ministry he will have such delight in pursuing his studies and composing his sermons, this fact, that he cannot depend on the church officers to do the spiritual work *with* him, much less *for* him, and, therefore, that he must expect to do it largely by himself, is a fact which should be carefully pondered while pursuing his studies. Aim to secure as largely as possible the ability for and the love of pastoral work. Make yourselves useful in the churches of your denomination here.

Offer your services as a learner for all sorts of pastoral work within your sphere. Especially seek direct intercourse with the unconverted, reasoning, pleading, praying with them. The help which will thus be obtained for future labor will be very valuable. Not having to learn how to deal with men and women and children as a pastor after entering on the pastoral work, you will economize a large amount of time for the study, and the pulpit, from the outset of your ministry.

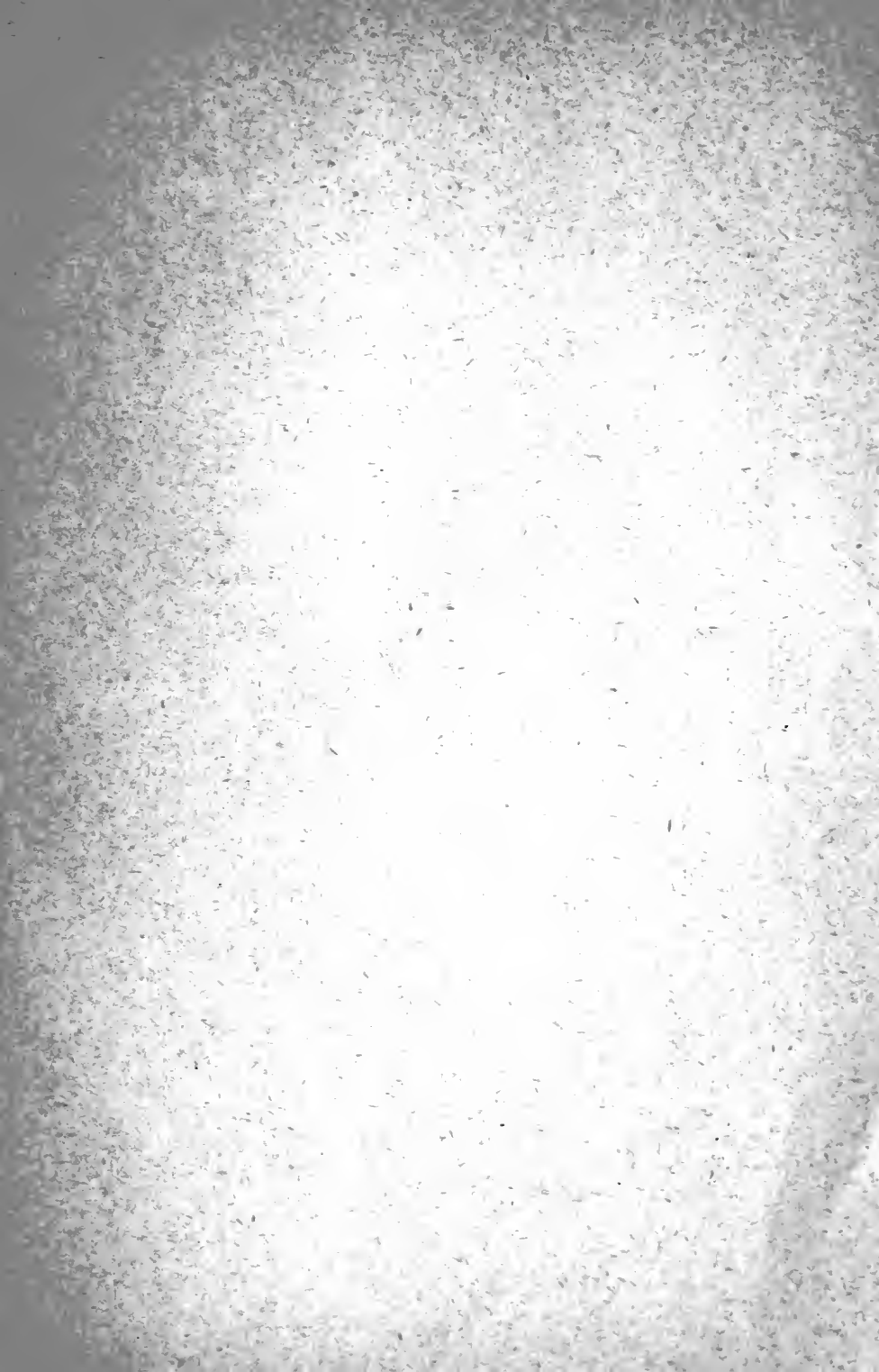
I must specially impress upon you my profound conviction that the burning questions of the hour in sociology will be more successfully solved by a ministry of *pastors* leading their congregations with them in ministrations of *practical Christianity* among the masses than by the eloquence of the preacher or the enactments of the state. What is needed among the different classes is *sympathy practically shown* by individual labor. The exacting demands of the pulpit in our cultivated congregations make this sort of pastoral labor almost impossible, except the occupant of the pulpit be a man of unusual ability, and thorough mental training. A careful attention to study, and especially the most thorough *training of the mind for the exercise of its powers*, is the wise preparation for the future which will insure more time for pastoral work. The pulpit must always be the minister's throne, but a preacher who is no pastor lacks vital elements of success. How hard it is to reach success as preacher and a pastor, there are very many ready to testify. The people expect so much more than we can possibly give them; and yet they realize so little how much they do expect, else they would more cheerfully lend a helping hand.

In the discharge of duty both as a preacher and pastor a *prime qualification is manliness*. Do not fear the face of anyone in the congregation when you are speaking for your Master, but always "try to speak the truth in love." First, last, all the time satisfy your own conscience and leave results with God. Covet a contented mind, free from even the "mildly complaining spirit," as one gently terms it. Have you trials? You have great blessings. Must you be poor in this world's goods? You can be rich toward God. Cultivate from the outset the good habit of giving to the causes of benevolence. Remember the poor, but do not allow yourself to be imposed on. Do not, as I have heard of ministers doing, hire a carriage to go and marry, or bury anyone, but let those who want you send for you. Some

minister is always near at hand. They know that you can't afford such an expense, but they will say nothing of it if you are simple enough to be imposed upon. A want of conscience, and a lazy desire to save trouble, are common infirmities of human nature.

My young brethren, I covet you the privilege of entering upon your work in this age of the world. It has always been a glorious privilege to live and to labor for Christ; it never was more glorious than now. Grasp the full significance of the age, and rise to your responsibilities and privileges. With the eye of faith discern the triumphs in which you will share. Mount on the wings of prayer into closer fellowship with the Master. Let *God* and not man be the centre of your preaching, your life, and of all your labor. Fear no difficulties, for with you is not "an arm of flesh." Sink under no sorrows or trials, for afflictions are but chastisements for your profit, and trials are but the putting you to proof that you may know better where your strength lies. Model your lives after Jesus—after no man, however great—the only model for all ages, places, and conditions, is Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith."

And now, with one more word of congratulation that you have been led to take up the holy calling of the ministry, let me close. Your heart being in it you will never regret it. I was privileged some years ago to ascend the great Pyramid of Gihzeh, and the view from its summit I shall never forget. I looked down over the great desert wastes on one side, and over beyond the hills I knew it was desert also, bleak and drear; but below me was a strip of living green—more lovely and striking for the barren surroundings; it was the land of Egypt, rendered thus beautiful by the beneficent river Nile, whose waters are diverted by human skill to bless the land. My young brethren, just such a stream of mercy flows through this sorrowful world, made sorrowful by man's sin. It is the river of Salvation, and your life work will be to lead off the rills in one direction and another into the deserts of human woe, that they may become the garden of the Lord. Can you or I ask for a nobler or more soul-satisfying labor? Ought we not to be very thankful that the Master has called us into the work?



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